

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-5 are pending

All claims remain unchanged.

The status of the claims is as follows:

1. (Original) A vertebral disk stabilizer for allowing adjacent vertebrae to flex forwardly and extend rearwardly comprising:

a first vertebral bracket having a vertebrae contact side, an opposing interlocking side, a front end, a rear end, and an attachment plate for attachment to a first of said adjacent vertebrae;

a second vertebral bracket having a vertebrae contact side, an opposing interlocking side, a front end, a rear end, and an attachment plate for attachment to a second of said adjacent vertebrae; and

a separate intervertebral disk member having a front end and a rear end and only one interlocking member on said front end of said disk member interlocking said interlocking side of said first vertebral bracket at said front end of said first vertebral bracket with said front end of said disk member and only one interlocking member on said rear end of said disk member interlocking said interlocking side of said second vertebral bracket at said rear end of said second vertebral bracket with said rear end of said disk member.

2. (Original) The stabilizer of claim 1 further comprising:

a supplemental compression member disposed between said interlocking side of each of said first and said second vertebral brackets.

3. (Original) The stabilizer of claim 2 wherein said supplemental compression member is selected from the group consisting of a compression spring, a leaf spring, and a compression plug.

4. (Original) The stabilizer of claim 1 wherein said interlocking member on each of said front end and said rear end of said disk member is selected from the group consisting of a rib, a groove, a ball, a socket, and a bearing element.

5. (Original) The stabilizer of claim 4 wherein said interlocking member on said disk member cooperates with a complimentary interlocking member on said front end and said rear end of each of said vertebral brackets, said complimentary interlocking member is selected from the group consisting of a rib, a groove, a ball, a pocket, and a bearing element.